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ABSTRACT

The first part of this two-part paper contains the original proposal for a college-level, team-taught library workshop designed for maximum interpersonal guidance on the mechanics of term paper preparation. It includes a survey of on-campus opportunities for students to receive help in developing their personal term paper skills, an assessment of the need for a workshop program as seen in students' apparently declining abilities, a justification of library involvement in teaching term paper skills, and a general description of the objectives and approach of the workshop sessions. The second part of the paper offers an analysis of the completed program that details promotional efforts, discusses the relative merits of the workshop format, identifies students' problem areas and major questions, and suggests improvements in workshop design. Appendixes contain a poster announcing the workshop and various guides distributed to students who participated in the workshop. (Author/FL)

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A Pilot Library Workshop on Term Paper Writing: Proposal and Final Report.

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Gregory P. Ames
Reference Department
Drake Memorial Library
S.U.N.Y. at Brockport
May, 1979

CS205166

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PROPOSAL FOR A PILOT "WORKSHOP ON WRITING TERM PAPERS"

OBJECTIVES:

1. To offer a team taught question and answer session in which a basic approach to writing term papers is taught.
2. To allow students the opportunity to receive personal attention to their specific term paper problems and needs.
3. To increase student-librarian contact and to underscore our role as a meaningful, helping institution on campus.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SERVICES AVAILABLE ON CAMPUS:

While some sections of the required English Composition (ENL 112) classes are oriented more or less toward the teaching of fundamental term paper skills (primarily as they relate to competence in expository composition), the majority of these classes do not include instruction in term paper skills per se.

Our one-credit Library Class, Humanities 300, has as its objective the training of students in library research and bibliography. It does not deal with the basic elements of term paper preparation.

The Learning Skills Center does offer personal assistance and advisement in term paper writing, although this service is scarcely used by students, according to Gay Church, Director of

Learning Skills. Its low use factor might be attributable to the stigma of remedial learning or the fact that students most in need of help in this area tend to avoid classes requiring papers.

RATIONALE:

Students vs. Term Papers: A kind of seasonal warfare the major battles of which we recognize as being fought on our terrain, the library. Library instruction, to be sure, minimizes the ferocity of some of these engagements, but the tenor of the battle seems to be changing. Increasingly, the need for basic instruction and advisement in term paper writing is evident at the Reference Desk, where questions either revealing a lack of understanding in this area or questions specifically regarding problems of term paper preparation are becoming daily more commonplace (this, despite a very real trend towards not assigning term papers, even in upper division classes).

We have observed in daily reference service the rise of the assigned annotated bibliography as a pale surrogate for term paper writing. Several faculty members have voiced their disappointment with the quality of student output in this area, such that they despair of assigning research papers.

A recent report by Roger Weir, Director of Counseling, may help explain this trend. According to an annual survey administered to incoming freshmen, the academic abilities of new students seem to be declining. In 1976, for example, 9.4% of our freshman class

reported high school averages of A. This compares to 5.6% for entering freshmen in 1978 (19.5% was the national figure). More significantly, Brockport students appear to be less confident about their study skills as compared to other schools. A meager 11.4% feel that they are well prepared in this area, as opposed to 17.4% on the nationwide level.

Obviously, we are increasingly being set the task of serving a student population more in need of fundamental skills and training than heretofore. The "Workshop on Writing Term Papers" is designed to meet but one of these basic skill needs. For our part, this type of contact with students should foster a better understanding of students' abilities and needs, and consequent reference requirements. In addition, this program may help us gauge the usefulness and general demand for similar approaches to teaching other basic academic skills. Ancillary benefits are increased library exposure and closer librarian/student contact.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

One of the problems in eliciting student response to "term paper clinics" may be the stigma attached to remedial learning (suggested by the term "clinic"). "Term Paper Workshop" is offered as an alternative, more positive, title (see Writing Workshop: Philosophy, Form and Function in an Elective Composition Program, by Sylvia Newman, ED 124 965).

Basic Approach in the Classes: should be based on librarian

receptivity to student problems. Five classes of ten students are optimistically projected. Each Workshop session will begin with a 15-20 mintue briefing on the organizational aspects of term paper writing with emphasis placed on compositional standards in grammar, word structure, bibliographic format, and footnote procedure (the how, why, when and where of footnotes). Hints for the selection and narrowing-down of term paper topics will be offered and the basic points of goal-oriented writing discussed. Each student, time permitting, will be asked to voice some specific term paper problems s/he is currently facing.

Upon registration for the session, each student will be supplied with a general descriptive sheet on the Workshop which will emphasize the importance of student participation in the session. The descriptive sheet should be generally designed so that it sets a helping, friendly atmosphere (one in which the Workshop itself should be conducted), and so worded that it does not intimidate the reluctant student. The relevance of research paper writing might be suggested as well as the importance of selecting a topic of personal interest. Students will also be asked to prepare their questions in advance.

The question and answer period is of course the nucleus of the session. Librarians will promote an open, friendly atmosphere, conducive to informal discussion, and point out solutions, suggest remedies, or seek advisement for students when applicable (this may take the form of a referral to a librarian with a subject specialty

if the question warrants this and staff is amenable). Problems of individual students should be universalized when appropriate in an effort to minimize embarrasment of students as well as to make individual problems more relevant to the entire class.

Distinction should be made at the outset that Reference librarians on duty at the desk do not usually have the time to advise on lengthy matters pertaining to term paper preparation per se. That is the purpose of the workshops, as well as the Individualized Library Instruction (ILI) sessions, which are available upon student request and may focus on any aspect of library use or research, general or specific.

Harold Ettelt's excellent Guide to Writing Term Papers will be revised as needed and distributed to students at the workshop, along with several other appropriate basic guides.

SCHEDULING:

Both day and evening workshops will be scheduled for student convenience. These should be expected to last one hour and forty-five minutes, although modest extensions may be deemed appropriate, either for group or individual advisement.

PROMOTION:

Contact with departments is essential if we are to gain general support for the Workshop. Descriptive signs will be placed at strategic points in the library, on campus, and in dormitories.

In addition, a feature article and/or advertisement in the Stylus campus newspaper might be advisable.

CREDIT:

The possibility of some form of "extra credit" for attendance at the workshop will be explored, perhaps in the form of extra grade points for a specific class (to be agreed upon by the instructor).

Gregg Ames
3/79

PILOT

TERM PAPER WORKSHOP:

FINAL REPORT

and

THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE PROGRAM

I. GENERAL BACKGROUND

Three workshops were offered:

DATE	TIME	NUMBER REGISTERED	ATTENDED	TAUGHT BY
1) April 6,1979	10:00 -	6	0	G. Ames/Y. Maloney
2) April 9,1979	3 - 5:30	10	5	G. Ames
3) April 10,1979	7:30 - 10(PM)	9	10	G. Ames/Y. Maloney

The workshops were advertized on the campus closed-circuit television and by more than 40 broadsides posted throughout the campus (student union, dormitories, classroom buildings, dining halls) and in strategic points in the library (reference desk, circulation desk, copy center, kiosks in the foyer, etc.). Professors known to me through library instruction classes were sent informational materials about the workshops and were asked to refer students in need of help or guidance. From informal discussion with students attending the workshops, we learned that several students had been referred to the program by faculty.

Four individualized instruction sessions on term paper writing were also given to interested students whose schedules could not be

accommodated by the group workshops. The first workshop's "0" attendance figure was attributable to severely inclement weather. Only one of the students missing the first workshop attended a subsequent session. Only one student arrived at a workshop unregistered.

Three guides were distributed to students in addition to the introductory sign-up sheet handed out upon registering for a workshop. These were: Approach to Library Research; Bibliographic Form; and How to Write a Term Paper in 21 Steps. All of these are standard Drake Library guides (except for the latter) which were recently revised with the workshops in mind. (see Appendix)

The workshops dealt with such a small sample of the student population that it would be inappropriate to take the following general observations of workshop participants as being revelatory of the whole campus. It's nevertheless of interest to note that of the 25 students who registered for the classes over 70% were seniors. From conversations with workshop participants both during and after the sessions it became clear that it was a quite practical need for immediate direction and advice which elicited student interest in the program. It became evident also, that most of these students regarded their current term paper writing efforts to be their "first serious experience" with term paper/research preparation. Many remarked that they had encountered little or no experience with term paper writing in their high schools or in their previous college course assignments.

One assumes that the upper division classes a college senior

would be required to take should demand more sophisticated research efforts than a student might have been previously exposed to. It seems hard to believe that we were dealing with a majority of upper classmen who were at last encountering their "first serious term paper experience." It could very well be that the workshop attracted the attention of those upper classmen who had been, until that point, successful in avoiding classes in which term papers were assigned. Then again, our problem may be largely semantic. A current term paper experience might, to a student's mind, seem a more serious, i.e., a more threatening undertaking than last semester's expended efforts in the same area.

Students' questions and problem areas were accurately predicted in the proposal for the program. Most of their queries concerned footnote rationale and procedure, How do I get started?, etc. At both workshops, the pedagogical legitimacy of term paper assignments ("Why do I have to write a term paper?") was called into question and, in one session, this precipitated a vigorous (oftentimes amusing) debate concerning the educational significance of research writing.

The adequate documentation of sources used for research was of prime importance to both groups. Most students were completely unaware that ideas or theories borrowed from other authorities, even when paraphrased or summarized in the student's own words, ought to be fully credited in a footnote.

It was suggested to students that they purchase their own inexpensive, paperback copy of any of the acceptable style manuals available. The importance of reading the introductory notes of the style manual carefully and becoming skilled in refering to the index to answer their bibliographical format problems was stressed. For the purposes of most of their classes, the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations would be a good choice. However, it was explained that many disciplines, notably Psychology and Biology, favored their own formats over that of the standardized MLA Handbook, and that when in doubt students should not hesitate to ask an instructor which of the generally accepted formats s/he prefers.

Many workshop participants felt they had difficulty focusing on a topic and developing a theme or position in a logical and orderly fashion. The most well-received suggestions for help in this area included:

1) The writing of a succinct, one sentence statement describing the nature of the research paper and its objective (which could later be amplified into an introductory paragraph of the text).

2) Formal outlines are anathema to many students, but certainly some method of organizing thematic development is called for to guide a student's efforts. Suggested instead of an outline was a simple step approach; each step corresponding roughly to a paragraph (a "thought" or "theme unit"), each paragraph

leading a reader further to the specifically stated research goal. Should a paragraph not wholly contribute to the support or logical progression of a given theme, then it does not belong in the structure of the text and should be revised or discarded, or the logical development of the research paper (stairway representation) is weakened.

This admittedly over-simplified design was considerably appreciated by students particularly as a means to affirm the logic of their written work. It may also function as a diagram that needs to be filled in with the essential points or ideas of a theme before the writing of a paper can begin.

Despite the promotional materials' explicit statements regarding the intent of the workshops, some students also sought information and leads on basic reference sources for their research. While these questions did not lay within the specific purview of the workshop, it was felt necessary to be as responsive to student needs as practicable. In any case, most of the queries in this area could be quickly and efficiently answered and did not pose a problem in regard to the economic use of time. Interested students were referred to the Individualized Library Instruction Program as well as to our one credit Library Resources course.

II. HOW WELL DID IT WORK?

The validity of the workshop approach, as opposed to an Individualized Library Instruction appointment or classroom presentation, was affirmed, but with some notable provisos. These will be elaborated further below.

Initial misgivings about whether students would be sufficiently motivated and uninhibited to respond to the workshop environment and to represent their difficulties in a group situation proved to be unfounded. A majority of the students were quite willing to ask questions and discuss points of interest raised in the preliminary talk on a basic approach to term paper writing. Most students in fact were completely candid in regard to what they felt to be their very limited abilities in the face of a complex task for which they had little or no preparation or background.

I think it safe to surmise that the workshop participants' willingness to impart and share their anxieties and frustrations about term paper writing was creditably indicative of the positive, helping atmosphere promoted in the workshops. In this regard, the workshops were an unqualified success; they went a long way toward the breaking down of the very real emotional barriers that sometimes exist in a student's mind. These emotional blocks hinder the adequate researching and writing of term paper assignments and are without a doubt conducive to the

successful research paper's arch enemy: procrastination.

At no point did either workshop leader/librarian feel that his/her legitimacy as "term paper expert" was questioned by students. This bodes well for the consideration of offering other basic skills courses taught by librarians.

Most of the students responded favorably, in a variety of ways, to their session. Several students complained about not having participated in the workshop earlier in their academic careers ("Wasn't it advertized back then?"). Many students voiced unsolicited their positive feelings about their workshop experience.

The contingencies, however, of teaching term paper writing in a workshop setting proved more variable than was viewed originally in the program's preparatory sketch. Despite the fact that a mere fifteen students actually attended the sessions, the great disparity between the individual abilities of even this small number of students came as a surprise. In the small workshop of five students, this difference in skill levels was easily accomodated by the close contact between the workshop leader and the students. From their initial comments and questions, it was a fairly simple matter to roughly gauge each student's relative expertise and to make personally relevant for each of the participants most of the topics discussed in the session. In the workshop of ten students, this approach proved impractical. It was unrealistic to assume that each participant's

varying needs and expectations of the workshop could be personally met and sufficiently dealt with on a relatively larger scale, even though this session was team taught. Many of the members of this group were ready to discuss the more advanced organizational aspects of term paper preparation, while others needed the most elementary kind of assistance.

Although the latter session was far from unsuccessful, it clearly pointed up a weakness in the workshop's design. It proved difficult to consistently maintain the collective interest of the participants when each had widely varying needs that called out for specific attention. The workshops were originally designed of course to maximize inter-personal contact within the parameters of the group situation. The following modifications to the workshop approach should make it more effective in responding to the individual needs of workshop participants:

1) The workshop session's maximum capacity should be lowered to six students.

2) Some form of interview or questionnaire would be appropriate upon registration for workshops to direct the prospective participant into a session consisting of peers of comparable abilities and/or expectations.

3) Team teaching neither helps nor hinders the workshop session. In the interest of effective use of staff time, it is not at all necessary to team teach these sessions.

4) An evaluative questionnaire distributed to students

after the workshops might aid in quantifying the positive and negative aspects of this approach to basic skills instruction.

III. THOUGHTS ON A FUTURE PROGRAM

The advantages of term paper workshops over Individualized Library Instruction (ILI) appointments and class presentations are manifold. Although ILI's offer maximum personal instruction, they are not time effective (often lasting as long as a workshop session). Workshops offer the potential of personal interaction along with more effective use of staff time and invoke as well a not inconsiderable measure of "group therapy." Class presentations, though they may be most effectively taught, clearly do not reach all of the participants in the personal way a workshop does. The opportunity for open-ended questions, discussion, and individual attention is of course not generally present in the classroom environment.

That the workshop failed to draw as many students as expected certainly does not indicate the lack of a needy audience on campus for such a program. One has only to ask any professor about the general quality of the papers s/he corrected last semester to understand the necessity of an ongoing program for remedial help in this area.

Advertizing in the student newspaper is plainly necessary to attract student awareness. Also, as suggested by Eileen

Dubin, et al., in their "In Depth Analysis of a Term Paper Clinic" (Illinois Libraries, 60 (March 1978), pp. 324-333), multiple copies of notices and promotional materials concerning the workshops should be forwarded to department chairmen requesting them to advise their faculty of the service. More student referrals from faculty are required if the program is to attain any measure of success. Further, faculty members need to be consulted in regard to the types of problems they see students encountering with term paper writing.

We may consider the potential of incorporating a basic term paper skills approach (as an option open to the professor's discretion) in the library's regular instruction classes, both as an adjunct to course-related bibliographic instruction and as an integral element of the one-credit Humanities 300 (Library Resources) course.

Another workshop offering on the preparation of personal resumes might be a suitable project, also, in the near future.

Gregg Ames
May 1979

APPENDIX

WELCOME TO THE WORKSHOP ON WRITING TERM PAPERS

The workshop on writing term papers is designed to help you write a better term paper more efficiently, more effectively, and less painfully. The most important part of term paper writing is something that cannot be taught - and that's individual initiative. You have a good supply of initiative already, otherwise you wouldn't have signed up for the workshop. You're halfway to learning how to write a good term paper already!

We'll be presenting a 15-20 minute talk on some of the most important points of term paper writing, and then we'll ask you and the other members of the workshop to ask questions or bring up some of the problems you might have come across in writing term papers. Your questions are the most important part of the workshop. You'll be learning from other students' questions also. The workshop should last 1 1/2 hours or so.

Writing a term paper is a good way of learning to communicate effectively. It's also a good way for you to uncover and develop your own insight into topics of interest. In fact, wherever possible (if the choice is left up to you), try to write about something that seems important or interesting to you. We'll talk more about this at the workshop. Until then, it's important for you to think of some questions about term paper writing that you might have. Whether it's narrowing down a research topic, how and when to footnote, or just plain how to get started, take a few minutes to jot down at the bottom of this page some of the problems you've come up against, and bring this sheet to the workshop with you. See you there.

We'll be seeing you on _____ at _____ in room _____ at Drake Library.

Gregg Ames
Yolanda Maloney

Your questions:

PROBLEMS WITH TERM PAPERS?

Before

After

SIGN UP TO ATTEND THE LIBRARY'S

"HOW TO WRITE A TERM PAPER"

22

WORKSHOP

23

Choice of dates: Fri. Apr. 6 (10^{00}), Mon. Apr. 9 (3^{00}), Tues. Apr. 10 (7^{30})

Stop at the Reference Desk or Call 395-2450 { Yolanda Malone
Gregg Ames

BIBLIOGRAPHIC FORM

Good research writing requires the complete citing of sources used. As the actual format for footnotes and bibliographies often varies from one style manual to another, don't hesitate to ask your professor which of the generally accepted formats s/he suggests you use. Some style manuals that you may be required to use in the course of writing your term papers are:

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 1977 (REF LB 2369 .M165)

Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. 2nd ed. 1974 (REF BF 76 .7 .A46 1974)

Style Manual: A Guide for Authors and Publishers in the Biological Sciences. 4th ed. 1978 (REF Z 250 .6.B5 .C6 1978)

Kate Turabian's Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 4th ed. 1973 (REF LB 2369 .T8 1973)

The examples for footnoting (F) and bibliographic (B) form given below are based on the MLA Handbook, one of the most commonly used guides to bibliographic form.

Single Author	F.	Eli Sagan, Cannibalism: Human Aggression and Cultural Form. (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 176
	B.	Sagan, Eli. Cannibalism: Human Aggression and Cultural Form. New York: Harper & Row, 1974.
Two Authors	F.	Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman, Time on the Cross. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1974), p. 203.
	B.	Fogel, Robert William, and Stanley L. Engerman. Time on the Cross. Boston: Little, Brown, 1974
Three Authors	F.	J. Raymond Gerberich, Harry A. Greine, and Albert N. Jorgenson. Measurement and Evaluation in the Modern School. (New York: McKay, 1962), p. 27.
	B.	Gerberich, J. Raymond, Harry A. Greine, and Albert N. Jorgenson. Measurement and Evaluation in the Modern School. New York: McKay, 1962
More than three authors	F.	Andrei Petrovich Tomilov et al., Electrochemistry of Organic Compounds. (New York: Halstead, 1972), p. 103.
	B.	Tomilov, Andrei Petrovich, et al. Electrochemistry of Organic Compounds. New York: Halstead, 1972.
Corporate author (organization, institution)	F.	American Medical Association. Department of Drugs. AMA Drug Evaluations, 2nd ed. (Acton, MA: Publishing Science Group, 1973), p. 501

B. American Medical Association. Department of Drugs. AMA Drug Evaluations. 2nd ed. Acton, MA: Publishing Science Group, 1973.

Revised book

F. Clarence Scheps and E.E. Davidson. Accounting for Colleges and Universities, Rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1970), p. 19.

B. Scheps, Clarence, and E.E. Davidson. Accounting for Colleges and Universities. Rev. ed. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1970

Translated or edited book with author

F. Jean Piaget, Piaget Sampler: An Introduction to Jean Piaget Through His Own Words, ed. Sarah F. Campbell. (New York: Wiley, 1976), p. 15.

B. Piaget, Jean. Piaget Sampler: An Introduction to Jean Piaget Through His Own Words. Ed. Sarah Campbell. New York: Wiley, 1976.

Edited book

F. Robert Chambers, ed., The Book of Days: A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1914), p. 327.

B. Chambers, Robert, ed. The Book of Days: A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1914.

Chapter in a book

F. John Singleton, "Implications of Education as Cultural Transmission," Education and Cultural Process, ed. G. Spindler. (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1974), pp. 26-38.

B. Singleton, John. "Implications of Education as Cultural Transmission," G. Spindler, ed. Education and Cultural Process. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1974.

Magazine or journal article

F. Miroslav Nincic, "Determinants of Third World Hostility Toward the United States: an Exploratory Analysis," Journal of Conflict Resolution, 19 (1975), 627.

B. Nincic, Mirosalv. "Determinants of Third World Hostility Toward the United States: an Exploratory Analysis" Journal of Conflict Resolution, 19 (1975), 620-42.

Newspaper article, with author

F. Judy Klemesrud, "Something Has Gone Haywire," New York Times, 9 March 1976, Sec. C, p. 1, col. 1.

B. Klemesrud, Judy. "Something Has Gone Haywire." New York Times, 9 March 1976, Sec. C, p. 1, col. 1.

Newspaper article, no author

F. "Noise: Shout of Protest," New York Times, 30 May 1976 Sec. 9, p. 3, col. 1.

B. "Noise: Shout of Protest." New York Times, 30 May 1976, Sec. 9, p. 3, col. 1.

Encyclopedia article, with author

F. William McGreevey, "Colombia," Encyclopedia Britannica, 1974.

B. McGreevey, William. "Colombia." Encyclopedia Britannica (1974).

Pamphlet, no author

F. Foreign Trade 74, The Port of New York and New Jersey. (New York: Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, 1974), p. 5.

B. Foreign Trade 74, The Port of New York and New Jersey. New York: Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, 1974.

Microform collections (ERIC, etc.)	F. Royce King, Administrator's Guide for School District Self-Evaluation. (Austin, TX: Education Service Center, Region 13, 1975), p. 7 (ERIC ED 120 927). B. King, Royce. Administrator's Guide for School District Self-evaluation. Austin, TX: Education Service Center, Region 13, 1975. (ERIC ED 120 927).
Congressional hearings	F. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on Ways and Means, National Health Insurance. Hearings Before a Committee on Ways and Means. 93rd Congress. 2nd Session. April 24, 1974, vol.1 (Washington: GPO, 1974), p. 182. B. U.S. Congress. House. Committee on Ways and Means. National Health Insurance. Hearings Before a Committee on Ways and Means. 93rd Congress. 2nd Session. April 24, 1974, vol. 1. Washington: GPO, 1974. (Other types of government publications may be cited by using the same general format).
Public Law	F. Title IX. Prohibition of Sex Discrimination. P.L. 92-318. 86 Stat. 373 (1972). B. Title IX. Prohibition of Sex Discrimination. P. L. 92-318. 86 Stat. 373 (1972).
Court Case (Supreme Court)	F. Feiner v. New York, 340 U.S. 315 (1950). B. Feiner v. New York. 340 U.S. 315 (1950).
Dissertation	F. Eric L. Gans, "The Discovery of Illusion: Flaubert's Early Works, 1835-1837," Diss. Johns Hopkins 1967, p. 34. B. Gans, Eric L. "The Discovery of Illusion: Flaubert's Early Works, 1835-1837." Diss. Johns Hopkins 1967.

AN APPROACH TO LIBRARY RESEARCH

Drake Memorial Library

When students are asked to write a research paper, the question always arises "How do I begin?" First think about a topic which interests you as well as one that falls within the limits of discussion in your class. Use textbooks, personal readings, class notes, or anything that gives you an idea of a suitable topic. You may want to begin by browsing in the library, but interest in pursuing a topic is a must before you begin in-depth library research. Once you have an idea, be flexible and willing to broaden or to narrow down as you progress. Most often the paper will be about one small facet of a much larger subject you began on!

Here are a few steps which may be helpful when you begin your library research:

A. Select a topic.
   1. Use textbooks, or any available reading material.
   2. General reading in the library.
   3. Make list of synonyms or relevant terms:
      Dictionaries and encyclopedic articles are useful;
      Also use Subject Headings Used in the Dictionary Catalogs of the Library of Congress for acceptable subject headings used in the card catalog, as well as for synonyms.

B. Use the Card Catalog to locate books.
   Part of the card catalog is arranged by subject and the other part by author or title. This library uses Library of Congress classification system. The circulating books are found on the third floor, arranged by call number, alphabetically.

C. Use Reference Books.
   How can you find about the basic reference books in a particular subject field? One way is to use the Drake Library "guides." These are free mimeographed sheets which give a list of key books in a subject or may be more specific and tell how to use a certain set of books. They are found on the east side of the stairway on the main floor.

   Examples of Drake Library "guides":

"Biology"	"How to Use Biological Abstracts"
"Chemistry"	"Bibliographic Form"
"American Politics"	"Writing a Research Paper"

   1. Indexes and Abstracts
      In research it is essential to use the indexes and abstracts of a subject field. They lead to journal articles and to other kinds of published works. An index usually gives basic information such as the author, title, journal name, dates, and pages. An abstract gives this same information as well as a short description of the article or study.

2. Bibliographies
These are comprehensive or selective lists of readings on a particular subject. They are found at the end of books, book chapters, journal articles or any other type of published work. Bibliographies which make up whole books may be found through the card catalog (e.g., search under: Population - Bibliography).

3. Indexes to Government Documents
Government documents are any materials published by the U.S. government. They are not found through the card catalog, but have their own indexes. Government documents and their indexes are found in a separate area of the library (main floor, south end). Most may be checked out.

Government Documents Indexes

Monthly Catalog of the U.S. Government Publications (Govt. Docs. Index Tables)
The most important index to use in locating government documents of all kinds. Annual indexes are found at the end of each year's publications. A cumulated subject index covers 1900-1971.

Congressional Index Service (C.I.S.) (Govt. Docs. Index Tables)
This index leads to congressional publications and legislative histories.

A Few Basic Indexes in Reference:

Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature (Reference Index Tables)
Broad coverage to all subjects.

Social Sciences Index and Humanities Index (Reference Index Tables)

Public Affairs Information Service (P.A.I.S.) (Reference Index Tables)
Important subject index in ecenomics and public affairs.

New York Times Index (Reference Index Tables)

Bibliographic Index (Ref Z 1002 .B595)
This is a subject index to bibliographies which have been published separately or which appear in parts of books, articles, pamphlets, etc.

HOW TO WRITE A TERM PAPER
IN 21 STEPS -

Writing a term paper can be a frightening experience or an enlightening one. Most often, it's something in-between those extremes, but in any case it's what you and your knowledge, experience, insight, and perserverance make it. There is nothing at all magical or extremely complex about doing a term paper. In fact, the job is a series of rather simple (though often time consuming) steps. It requires no greater intelligence than you have or you would not have been admitted to this institution. This guide was written to give you a better idea of how to approach basic term paper writing.

1.) What is a term paper? By term paper we mean a fairly sizable (5-20 pages is the norm) thoughtfully organized research effort containing a substantial amount of documented information. If it is not well-documented, it may be a marvelous creative effort, but it is not a term (or research) paper. The reason it must be well documented is simple: unless you are the world's greatest authority on the topic, there is a good deal you may not know. You cannot conjure up all that information yourself. You have to dig it up somewhere (this is usually done in the library, but is not restricted to it). Those who read your paper may want to go to your sources for added detail, as well as to check on your accuracy. They cannot do so unless you tell them what your sources are. Telling them is called documentation.

Your goal in term paper writing is to prepare a carefully considered, structured compilation of information on a given topic. You may be advocating some aspect of your topic (eg. "The Case for U.S. Congressmen Drinking More"). You might be debunking or giving reasons against some aspect of your topic (eg. "The Case for U.S. Congressmen drinking Less"), or you may want to discuss the relative merits and faults of a given issue (eg. "The Pros and Cons of Alcoholic Congressmen"). This is called your approach or stance on a given topic.

2.) Materials required for term paper preparation:

A. Writing implement
B. Materials upon which to write: these include something to take notes on and something to write your final paper on.
C. A style manual (this tells you the suggested format for footnotes, bibliographies, etc.)
D. Time (much time)
E. Effort (much effort)
F. Intelligence (you give what you've got)

3.) The most basic steps in preparing a term paper are:

A. Knowing exactly what's expected from you by your instructor (eg. length of paper, topic OK'd?, proper format)
B. Selecting a topic
C. Finding reliable information on your topic
D. Organization of the information, adding your own thoughts, so that a complete presentation forms in your mind
E. Writing that presentation down in a proper style, with complete footnotes and bibliography.

4.) <u>Selecting a Topic</u>

This can be easy. If you've been interested since 6th grade in the growth potential in inflationary periods of blue chip stocks, you're all set (providing your economics professor OK's this topic and you find sufficient information on the topic). When there's interest and motivation on

your side, writing a term paper can seem like half the normal work. But if you're stuck in that economics class, with little or no motivation, no assigned topics, and no tangible interest in economics about which to write, scout around a bit for a topic that may potentially interest you. Do this as soon as possible. Was there an aspect discussed in your textbook on, say small businesses, that sparked your interest? Check also in some of the basic library sources for leads on something of interest. To continue this example, perhaps the Wall Street Journal or Business Week might offer an idea.

To sum up, there three fundamentals related to selecting a topic:

A. Confirm the appropriateness of your proposed topic for the class.
B. If you can choose your own topic, write about something something of interest to you.
C. Make sure well ahead of time that the library can offer you sufficient information on your topic.

5.) Narrowing-down your topic

Term paper topics can be too broad or too narrow. Obviously, you'll want to select a topic that's broad enough for you to accumulate a sufficient body of information on, but narrow enough so that you'll be able to introduce, discuss, and sum up the topic in a given amount of pages. As a general rule, however, the more narrowly defined a topic is, the better. See if you can write in one sentence the basic purpose of your paper. This may help insure that you

haven't overextended yourself and will help also in defining the focus of your research effort.

RESEARCH STRATEGY

6.) Having more or less firmed up your topic, begin digging for information as soon as you can. The longer you give yourself, the easier the job will be. It's like a flight of steps: taking one step at a time is easy; trying to gain speed by skipping steps along the way is difficult and dangerous.

7.) This is an appropriate time for you to become acquainted with your style manual. Pick up a copy of the Library's guide to Bibliographic Form. The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations (REF LB 2369 .M165) is one of the most commonly used style manuals. Other style manuals are often used however, so check with your professor to be certain about which format s/he prefers.

8.) Rely on the Library Guides located opposite the card catalog to get you started researching your topic. These will introduce you to many of the basic reference sources you will use to compile adequate information on your topic.

9.) If you know very little about your chosen topic, or want to start out on solid ground with your research, track down first the most general sources you can find (such as handbooks and encyclopedias). Take notes (including full bibliographic information) and copy down any useful leads to other

sources as found in references and bibliographies.

10.) Acquaint yourself with the Library of Congress Subject Headings book located across from the card catalog, to determine the appropriate subject headings with which you will search the subject card catalog. You will want to search under broader terms, related terms, and synonyms for library materials which may be relevant to your topic.

11.) Search the card catalog for books bearing directly or indirectly on your topic. Check the information they contain, then take notes (including full bibliographic information), and check these sources for further bibliographic leads to related materials.

12.) Use pertinent indexing and abstracting sources, bibliographies, etc. to locate even more information on your topic (many of these sources may be listed in the library guides previously mentioned). Don't hesitate to ask the librarian on duty at the reference desk for help in this regard.

13.) Having found the articles, books, etc. through use of items in step 12, take notes on the information they contain (don't forget to record full bibliographic information). Check to see if these contain any other references you can use and run these down, too.

STOP!

14.) All this should have taken you days, perhaps (depending on the complexity of your topic), even a week. You're tired, fed up, demoralized. If you're some kind of nut you're ex-

hilarated, high. Either way you need a short respite or period of recuperation. Rest a day or so, then examine your notes. Reevaluate your goals for the paper if need be, but be certain that you have enough information to back up your thesis.

15.) Now try to string all that information together, use it to weave a tale. See if you can put it all into a logical sequence like a TV documentary or a book. If there are obvious holes in your story, if no coherent pattern emerges, it's back to the drawing board. Fill those holes with information and don't be surprised if you find it in some of the sources you've already used. Your eyes are seeing much more now because you have something to say. You're beginning to become a pro, an expert!

16.) A Word About Footnotes

A footnote is a way of giving credit where credit is due. It is required that you footnote all direct quotations that you use in the text of your paper. It is also required that you footnote all ideas, thoughts or opinions that you've come across in your research and actually use in your term paper. This is a matter of courtesy, as well as being good scholarship. Remember: one of the basic purposes of term paper writing is for you to survey a body of knowledge on a given topic, credit that knowledge, insight, or opinion where it's due, and add your own analysis and interpretation.

17.) Once you have it all together, and have formed that story in your mind, begin your rough draft. Alternatively, make a written outline, then write it all down (footnoting as you do), read your notes again, read what you've written, make necessary changes, read it all again, read your notes again, etc., until you're satisfied you've produced a respectable effort.

18.) What you should have by now is a reasonably legible (not neat, just legible) paper with every fact and opinion not obviously belonging to you fully footnoted.

STOP AGAIN!

19.) This time, let at least two days go by without even thinking of your paper. Then pick it up and read it with your rested mind. Make certain that it's consistently logical and develops your theme from the introduction through the body of your text on to the final conclusion. Clean it up, organize it a bit better, put a few cool touches in, and a bit of flourish or whatever is your style. Type it up as per style manual. You're done!

20.) This probably sounds like a lot of work and it is. But it's all work that you can get used to and better at until it seems as if it's not so much work after all. Once that happens you're on your way. You'll be able to get good grades now, go to grad school later, write up reports for your company of organization, or just for your own information. The same kinds of steps are used to research a doctoral thesis, or report to an ecology group, or gather facts to clobber a

politician with. Learn how once and it's like riding a bicycle, you'll never forget.

21.) Two books which answer a lot of questions about preparing research papers are:

Lee, C.P. Library Resources: How to Research and Write a Paper. (REF LB 2369 .L37)

Marsh, Marilyn. How to Write Your First Research Paper. (REF LB 2369 .M35)

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